

Message Text

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C O N F I D E N T I A L LONDON 02858

EXDIS

E.O. 11652: XGDS-1

TAGS: ENRG, UK

SUBJECT: EC-ARAB DIALOGUE: DAVIGNON'S REMARKS IN
LONDON

REF: (A) STATE SECTO 137, (B) BRUSSELS 1350,
(C) LONDON 2805

1. BELGIAN POLITICAL DIRECTOR DAVIGNON COMMENTED ON
THE US REACTION TO THE EC-ARAB COOPERATION DECISION IN
THE COURSE OF AN OFF-THE-RECORD TALK ON THE GENERAL
STATE OF THE EUROPEAN COMMUNITY, WHICH HE DELIVERED
AT A LUNCHEON MEETING OF THE MID-ATLANTIC CLUB IN
LONDON ON MARCH 6.

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2. DAVIGNON SAID THAT HE HAD BEEN SURPRISED BY THE

STATE DEPARTMENT'S NEGATIVE REACTION TO THE EC DECISION. THE COMMUNITY HAD BEEN CONSIDERING WAYS TO COOPERATE WITH THE ARAB COUNTRIES FOR YEARS, HE SAID, ORIGINALLY AS A WAY OF EXTENDING TO A EUROPEAN LEVEL THE CLOSE TIES THAT FRANCE HAD WITH THE MAHGREB. DAVIGNON POINTED OUT THAT THE EC DECISION ON COOPERATION WITH THE ARABS WAS APPROPRIATELY LIMITED TO ECONOMIC RELATIONS. HE MADE CLEAR HIS BELIEF THAT EUROPE IS NOT IN A POSITION TO PLAY A MAJOR ROLE IN MIDDLE-EAST PEACE-KEEPING AT THIS STAGE, AND THAT THERE IS NO REASON WHY THE EC DECISION SHOULD INTERFERE WITH THE VERY CONSTRUCTIVE ROLE THAT THE US IS PLAYING.

3. NOR DID HE SEE ANY REASON WHY THE EC-ARAB COOPERATION DECISION SHOULD IN ANY WAY UNDERMINE THE WORK OF THE ENERGY COORDINATING GROUP. THE EC-8 COMMITTED THEMSELVES AT THE WASHINGTON ENERGY CONFERENCE TO WORKING FOR SOLUTIONS TO THE ENERGY CRISIS IN COOPERATION WITH THE UNITED STATES AND OTHER MAJOR CONSUMERS. THERE IS NO REASON FOR THE US TO INFER FROM THE EC-ARAB COOPERATION DECISION THAT THE EIGHT HAVE SUDDENLY GONE BACK ON THIS COMMITMENT. IN FACT, DAVIGNON SAID THAT THE SUCCESS OF THE ENERGY COORDINATING GROUP IS ABSOLUTELY VITAL TO GOOD US-EC RELATIONS.

4. WITH REGARD TO THE PROBLEM OF PRIOR CONSULTATION, DAVIGNON SAID THAT THE US AND THE COMMUNITY WOULD HAVE NOTHING TO GAIN FROM FALLING INTO A CONTINUING EXCHANGE OF ACCUSATIONS AND COUNTER-ACCUSATIONS OVER EACH ONE'S FAILURE TO CONSULT THE OTHER.
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